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AP English Language

2. The difference between right and wrong is clear.

I guess the simple and easy way out to this question would be to give you a brief 2 paragraph ramble on how “everyone is different”, “we’re all unique” it “depends on our beliefs”. The truth of the matter is I think deep down people know what’s right and what’s wrong. Of course what’s right to me may not be right to you that’s a given, but the question at hand isn’t asking me to evaluate what act is right and what act is wrong, it’s asking if I know a clear determination between the two. In my humble opinion we do know what’s right, when we hold the door open for someone we know it’s the right thing to do, and when someone doesn’t say thank you we get agitated, but why? Because we know its common courtesy and we want to be rewarded for good deeds. When you’re 5 years old and you break your mother’s favorite vase your natural instinct is to hide it, or deny it ever happened, and why? Because we know our mother’s going to give us a backhand across the face. We deep down inside know that it’s wrong and we should have been more careful. I think our natural instincts as human is to make things more complex than they seem, when sometimes 2+2 really does equal 4. Deep down inside us we know it’s wrong to do something, however we may be jaded by other outside factors that deter us from determining that. A classic example would be Jean Valjean from Victor Hugo’s *Les Miserables*, in the book Jean Valjean steals a loaf of bread in order to support his family and ends up thrown in jail. Although in the book Jean Valjean states that he doesn’t believe what he did was wrong and he shouldn’t have been thrown in jail, deep down his character knows it wasn’t right or else he wouldn’t have tried to hide from the police, however due to the fact that there was a famine at the time and he had no other means of supporting or feeding his family it led him to committing the crime. Notice how Jean Valjean didn’t send his wife or children to do it and why not? He said there was nothing wrong with it, but deep down he knows that if his family were to get caught it’d be dangerous because it’s wrong. Don’t get me wrong you have to do what you have to do, but lying to yourself to consolidate your feelings by making yourself seem like your moral compass is on the right track by blaming outside factors doesn’t help. The act itself is still wrong, no matter what it is or who you are, when you’re little your cultural and societal surroundings teach you what’s wrong so that you know, it prepares you for the real world, it’s not as if you’ve been locked in a cage and left to learn life lessons by yourself. It’s easier for us to tell ourselves we don’t know something is wrong, because it allows us to commit it with much less of a chip on our shoulders. Let’s put it this way if it was right to do you wouldn’t have a second thought, you wouldn’t feel the need to hide it from other people, and you wouldn’t have to be asking yourself the very question.